

HER FACE IS HER FORTUNE — IF HOMELY

In Many Pursuits Woman Demonstrates the Commercial Value of a Snub Nose, Crossed Eyes or a Stringy Neck.

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THESE are the days of beauty parlors, face massage, "transformations," puffs, curls, courses of feature flaying, flesh food, acquired figures, paraffin in your cheeks, operations on your double chin and the thousand and one aids to beauty.

Man pads his shoulders and manures in the persevering attempt to emulate Apollo. Woman's pursuit of beauty began with time and will end only with eternity. North and South and East and West of this broad country are equally intent upon the same unalterable object—pink cheeks and a "shape."

The publication, however, in a New York paper recently would seem to suggest another point of view. It ran:—

"Wanted—An experienced girl for general housework; must be homely; no pretty girls need apply."

This advertisement at first seemed a joke. A person of imagination immediately pictured legions, regiments, multitudinous sections, battalions, groups, masses and—bunches of concentrated homeliness in skirts arising and proclaiming from behind uneven teeth and twisted mouths, "Gee! somebody appreciates us at last." The same imaginative person would see squat women smiling and thin women grinning and angular women chortling in the overbearing joy of being in demand at last. That is, however, only what the imaginative person would do. The practical one would go round to the employment agencies and to large employers of female labor and ask the question, Has homeliness a commercial value? Also, Are cross-eyed maidens desirable as help? And, Has the elliptical girl got a show in the labor market?

And, having so interrogated, you will find that the invariable answer is "Yes." There are lots of instances where beauty is invariably beaten to the job, when freckles may defy the massage parlor grade of complexion. Even in history and folk-lore this thing has obtained. Blue Beard was a successful wooer, notwithstanding, or perhaps because of, his "brush." Even Beauty loved her Beast, and, to come down to more substantial times, who can deny the triumphant homeliness of Aaron Burr?—hideous, but transcendent when the feminine heart was concerned.

However, these instances are primarily of the heart, which doesn't count, anyhow, these days. How about the commercial demand for the undecorative?

It is even very great, the agents say. It is constantly growing, although in certain peculiar lines of trade it shows a tendency to diminish. Where is now the call for bearded ladies—for the fattest women in the world? Where are the dog faced men and the persons with only one eye in the middle of their forehead? Gone, like the snows of yesteryear. The great public sighs after them no more. A few lingerers, dying hard, still straggle into Huber's Museum, New York, and an occasional museum in Boston or the Middle West, but their sun is set, their arctic night has already mantled down; they are on the ropes, and they can't "come back." The Luna Parks and the Dreamlands have been too much for them.

Where Beauty Loses.

These, however, are poor instances. Where is the army of the plain and the unvarnished of whom the registry agents have spoken? Why do they "beat beauty to it," and who seek them out in all their unlovely essentials?

The stenographer of one of the busiest managers of a large manufacturing concern in Chicago supplies at least a partial answer to these queries. She is sallow and sandy, freckled and spectacled. Each eye is watery and shows a tendency to peer in through the windows of the other's soul. She's got a streaky neck and a stringy figure. She has bony knuckles. She goes in where she should go out, and out where she should go in.

But she has held her job for a good many years at an ever increasing salary.

Her employer regards her as the apple of his eye. You couldn't loosen his hold of her with a clasp knife. For a long time his attitude was a mystery to his friends, who were all enabled to become humorists through the inspiration of his stenographer. Then he proceeded to explain:—

"You see," he said, "I'm in business for business and I hire my stenographer for exactly the same reasons as I hire my foreman—because I figure them both out to be thoroughly efficient. When I was younger I hired many pretty girls because I like to have 'em around. But listen to this:—I've never found a pretty girl who was really efficient in a business office. They think a good deal upon the subject of themselves and only a little bit on the work. They are probably figuring out how they're looking when they're doing everything."

"Every visitor who comes into the office, too, is continually rubbing and gives that stenographer a better idea of herself than ever. She's always pulling down her shirtwaist or frowning about her hair or rubbing chamols skin on her nose or taking a look at herself in her little hand mirror. She counts a good deal upon her good looks to hold her job—and very often she counts right."

"You'll take bad punctuation from a pretty girl when you would never stand it from a plain one."

"And not only that," he went on, "she not only wastes her own time, but that of everybody else in

the office. The boys are always pecking over the glass windows at her. Any clerk who can rake up a possible question to ask her will ask it. If she goes out into one of the passages somebody's sure to stop her to speak to her."

"No," concluded this man, shaking his head, "from a business point of view your pretty girl is a failure. She's a bad spell, a time waster and a disorganizer. Now, your homely girl," he went on, "is right down onto her job. She knows that if she doesn't nurse that nothing will save her. She can't think of her face, because that's fierce. She can't think of her shape, because she hasn't got any. She does think of her spelling, because that's her only hope. So usually your homely girl's a pretty good stenographer."

Indeed, it is surprising if you are collecting facts upon the utility of the decorative feminine how brightly the flat and angular young person shows up in comparison with her sister of the bright idea look and peachblow cheeks.

Worn Out by Late Dances.

"The pretty office help," said another business man recently from as far West as Seattle, "is nice all right, but you can't keep it. I've seen 'em come and go, and I know the signs. They—they won't do. As wives they're probably everything that could be claimed for them, but as office help!"

He shrugged his shoulders impotently.

"In the first place, they are half dead most of the



The Boys Are Always Peeking Over the Glass Windows at Her

time," he explained. "They get asked out so much, you know. They're always going to dances and they get back about three or four o'clock in the morning. They come to the office pretty, but limp. When they're not getting ready to take a good night's rest on account of the sleep they lost the night before they're getting ready for some other sort of a blow-out."

He was "slangy," though expressive; but his companion to whom he told these experiences adopted a tone of light satire.

"Ah, that pretty help," he said. "You can always tell 'em. They go through a regular evolution. I haven't found so much trouble in the way you speak of. I find they work pretty much as anybody else does, but—you can't keep 'em. Here's the history of the pretty little stenographer as I've found her. She comes to the office fresh and neat—she's fine. She stays like that, maybe, for about six months. Then one day she comes in with a bunch of roses in her waist, looking flushed and preoccupied. Her eyes are looking kind of bright and you catch her watching the clock a lot."

"The next stage comes with candles and telephone calls every day—candles in boxes, with pink and blue ribbons on 'em and paper inside them which looks like the latest thing in Fifth Avenue lingerie establishments. That lasts for about two or three months, and then one day—one day—she comes in with the I've-eaten-the-canary-ob-I'm-so-happy sort of look in her eyes, and that's the time you can look out for a new stenographer. She only appears perfunctorily for the sake of her trousseau after that. That is the road to ruin with the pretty stenographer as I've found her. No, no; I'm a modest man. I'll take mine freckled and flat in the future."

These instances will do to indicate roughly some of the reasons why bumps and angles are unpopular in business. But the managers in registry offices will tell you in confidence many things about the unexpected popularity of the young woman with a snub nose and who is built on the lines of a barrel—in the more domestic lines of activity. They will speak more de-



MODEST STEIN

There Might Be Danger of a Person of So Handsome Appearance To Be a Little Coquettish

girl is because of Monsieur, her husband. She doesn't wish to suffer by the comparison, you understand? In fact, it is really remarkable when you think of the number of women who deliberately employ only household help on account of the—what you call—setting it provides for themselves. And this is not only upon her husband's account, but also upon account of her friends. No woman likes to appear less personally attractive than her servant.

Want Homely Servants.

"So homely servants are really in great demand. One lady who is a client of mine," continued Madame, "is most particular about the engagement of homely help, though not for the reasons I have given," she said laughing, "for she is herself a very beautiful woman and need not fear competition. Her gowns!"—and then the registry office manager shrugged as if to ask what chance even the most beautiful person from Scandinavia had when stacked up against the gowns of Madame, her patroness.

"Well," said Madame, continuing, "this lady has a theory that the domestic servant who is beautiful or pretty finds it so easy to get placed that she becomes unduly independent. She is ready to throw up her job upon the least occasion. So Madame makes it a rule to see only the homeliest of the girls. 'They cook better,' she says; 'they housekeep better, they act better!'

"I have another client," the manager went on, "who usually leaves the choice of girls to me. She has, however, one hard and fast rule!"

"That they shall be unornate, too?" asked the writer.

"That they shall be plain, very plain," said Madame; "a little over the border of plain, to be

"Nothing light or frivolous?" remarked the writer. "Exactly," replied Madame. "Indeed, it is in the educational," said she, "that we find the greatest tendency to employ only persons who are homely. We notice it particularly in the case of governesses. It is very seldom that I have found a client who will accept a really handsome governess if it is at all possible to get a plain one. I don't know whether they consider them serious competitors," said Madame, who was not without a touch of humor, "that the master of the house might be—attracted, you know."

"Don't you think it likely?" asked the writer. "No, I don't," replied the manager, "but I think they would be likely to attract attention when out with the children—outside, you understand. I suppose that the mothers think that there might be some danger of a person of so handsome an appearance being a little coquettish. And the little ones are so easily imitative, you know. Yes, it is very true. I suppose the mothers think that, on the whole, a plainer governess would be a better example for the little ones."

Madame's registry office deals only with what is termed "the highest class of help." Her business connections are only with the very wealthy and for the upper grades of domestic employees. Further along the road is an establishment of another kind. It caters very largely to the hotel trade, and when visitors reach its anteroom through the medium of its rather dark stairs the broad area of the cry for homely help at once becomes manifest.

For it is found that in hotels also, large and small and first class and medium alike, is a tendency to choose the freckled sister rather than the fair to attend to the healthy offices of sweeping and dusting and making innumerable beds.

Clean, Tidy Girls.

"The call is for clean, tidy girls," the manager of this place said, "rather than pretty ones. A girl of very serious manner and expression is the one that is wanted for this class of work. Houses must be very careful of their tone, you know, and a bright and smiling eye is a positive handicap. With so many guests!"

Out of the registry offices the investigator of the durable, the undecorative, pursues his way. He enters a modern office building, with its marble vestibule and gilded elevator shaft. At the tenth floor a number of women get on. They are dressed in sober black. They are the army of office cleaners, who dust and sweep and set in order against the beginning of another day. They are long and short, narrow and broad, stout and concave; but beneath each varying quality each yet possesses one common attribute—the common quality of a harrowing, desolating plainness.

Sin, in fact, who is reputed to be a monster of most frightful mien, would have to hustle to get it on the average office charwoman—because she also is chosen on account of her ruggedly undecorative qualities. Here again the managerial heart is adamant against the claims of beauty. For it may be said unreservedly that no pink cheeks or blue eyes or delightful curves stand the shadow of a chance for a job in any representative office building in any large city in these United States. A good stout frame and a face that is a cross between a juvenile Hallowe'en celebrant and a wooden idol in the Hebrides is the requirement there.

For all of which reasons, therefore, the plainer sister can really cheer up. It is possible to look upon crooked noses with joy and twisted lips with elation and on eyes that converge with triumph. It is possible to regard a seventy-nine inch waist with satisfaction and a dead level front line with positive contentment. For beauty is not all, as we have been led to believe. It has the defects of its virtues, and homeliness the virtue of its defects. For it, too, can take its turn at the bat.

Let it cheer up.



No Woman Likes to Appear Less Personally Attractive Than Her Servant

reely upon the commercial advantages of being ugly and the employers who search out homeliness and bear it off in triumph.

There's the type of woman employer who insists upon a homely maid.

"I want a good, strong, honest looking girl," she'll say. Then she will whisper to Madame, "Oh, dear me, no. I don't want that one. She's got altogether too much style. I just want a good, strong girl—a good, stout, strong looking girl. I don't care about appearance."

"Of course, she doesn't tell her reason for that," says Madame, the manager, who speaks with a slightly foreign accent, "but her real preference for this strong

perfectly exact. She is the proprietress of a ladies' boarding school, and it puzzled me for some time to know why she insisted upon that particular class of help—though I did not ask, because, you understand, we must be diplomatic in this business. One day, however, after she had been dealing through me for two or three years, I did so. Now, I don't really know that I thoroughly agree with her reasons," remarked the manager, "but it was rather amusing. This lady had the belief that it would be better for the atmosphere of the establishment, you know, that the help employed should not convey the impression of being too coquettish. She thought it gave a serious touch to her establishment."